

SCOTLAND'S STORY

16

**The battle where
the royal standard
flew on both sides**

**How we came to
choose the thistle**

**Renaissance glory
transforms our
royal residences**

**Education comes
out of the cloisters**

**Manuel, the mass
killer trapped by his
own arrogance**



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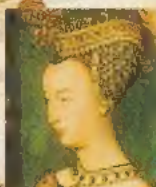
1460

Eight-year-old James III is crowned at Kelso within a week of his father's death at Roxburgh.



1468

James marries Margaret of Denmark, following the Treaty of Copenhagen.



1469

The minority of James ends and the Boyd family who ruled in his name are forfeited.



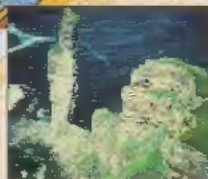
1479

James sends William Elphinstone, Lord of the Council, on a 'mission impossible' to maintain links with the French.



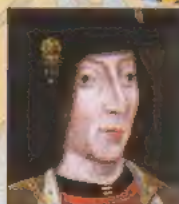
1472

Orkney and Shetland are annexed to the Scottish Crown following James's marriage settlement.



1488

James III is killed fleeing the Battle of Sauchieburn, where he armed himself with Bruce's sword.



1482

James is arrested by the leaders of the Scottish Army at Lauder, and his retainers hanged.



1507

Alchemist John Damian de Falcus fails in his attempt to fly from Stirling Castle.



1495

Pope Alexander VI issues the writ for foundation of Aberdeen University.



In Part 17:
Flodden's toll on the
flower of Scotland

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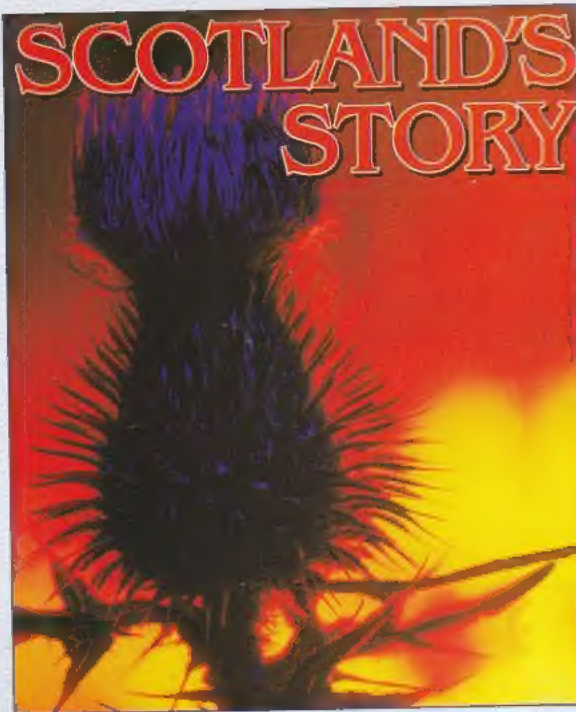
Despite his roots as a humble cleric William Elphinstone rose to be one of the most influential figures in James III's government. By Leslie Macfarlane, University of Aberdeen.

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SCOTLAND'S STORY



COVER:
Wha daur
meddle wi' me:
Scotland's
thistle, the
emblem
adopted by
James III.

Influenced by the courts of Europe

Powerful forces of change started to shape Scotland's culture in the 14th and 15th centuries.

The French influence had always been strong, partly due to the Norman knights who settled in Scotland from the days of Malcolm Canmore, and partly because of the enduring Auld Alliance.

Now the Renaissance started to spread north, mainly through the Stewart Kings who were determined to see Scotland recreate the splendour of the French and Burgundian courts.

The royal residences changed from Medieval castles built for defence, to sumptuous palaces like Linlithgow and Holyrood.

Even more influential was the spread of education out of the monasteries and into secular life.

From the 13th century, Scots had gone to Paris and Rome to study. Now Scotland founded her own universities at Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, but largely based on the Paris model.

If ever a king squandered his inheritance it was James III. His father and grandfather had whipped the Scottish nobility into shape and there was an end to the

seemingly interminable cold war with England.

But the young king quickly alienated his subjects.

He failed to enforce the rule of law, surrounded himself with low-born courtiers, debased the currency, and signed a hugely unpopular treaty with England, while ignoring the French.

Small wonder his generals rebelled, imprisoning James for two months before balking at the final stage of execution.

In the end James III suffered an ignominious death. His son took the field against him at the Battle of Sauchieburn, and when the defeated king fled he was hunted down and killed.

One of his legacies – a lesson in how not to reign.

Nobody who was there will forget the launch of the Queen Mary from John Brown's on September 26, 1934.

Eyewitness accounts capture the magic and the drama of the occasion, and the fact that the ship was only built with the help of £1,000,000 of government cash. Some things never change.

A king

James III's reign got off to an easy start. But after he threw away all advantages, its only virtue was a lesson to his son in how not to govern.

There can be no doubt that James III was blessed with initial advantages denied to his Stewart predecessors on the throne. Internally, he faced no major challenges from powerful territorial magnates – his father and grandfather had seen to that. And abroad, the recovery of the last major Scottish strongholds held by the English, Roxburgh and Berwick, at the outset of his reign appeared to herald the end of the seemingly interminable cold war with England which had dragged on through the 14th and early 15th centuries.

So the new reign promised much. Yet in the event, the kingship of James III, in spite of some early successes, proved to be a long-term disaster.

The reign began well enough, with the eight-year-old James crowned at Kelso within a week of his father's death at nearby Roxburgh, which fell to the Scots two days before the coronation.

Thereafter, government during the early years of James's minority was in the hands of his mother, Mary of Gueldres, who subtly played off the rival English houses of Lancaster and York to obtain Berwick through negotiation (1461) and then aligned herself with the victor in the English civil wars, the Yorkist Edward IV (1461-83).

After his mother's death in 1463, James III's guardians were James Kennedy, Bishop of St Andrews, in whose episcopal castle the king had been born in 1452, and the Boyds of Kilmarnock, rivals of the Kennedys who used control of the adolescent king (1466-9) to advance their own family interests. This was a dangerous game which came to an end with the forfeiture of the Boyds and the King's assumption of power in November, 1469.

In the realm of diplomacy, James III's minority (1460-69) saw a continuation of the policies of James II. This included the acquisition of a Danish bride – Margaret of Denmark – after the Treaty of Copenhagen in 1468, and the pawning to the Scots of the earldom of Orkney and lordship of Shetland by the bride's father, the impecunious Christian I, in lieu of his daughter's dowry. By 1472 the Orkneys and Shetlands had been annexed to the Scottish Crown.

So the early 1470s witnessed the emergence of a confident and aggressive James III. Between 1471

King James III as portrayed in the contemporary Trinity College Altarpiece by Hugo van der Goes.

vanquished by his son

and 1473 he tried to interest Louis XI of France in the dismemberment of Brittany, proposing that he himself would lead an army of 6,000 Scots in the French king's service; he laid claim to the vacant Duchy of Gueldres; and he renewed his father's claim to the French county of Saintonge.

All these schemes were abortive, but that James III seriously considered them disposes effectively of the later myth that the king was someone 'who desired never to hear of wars'. On the contrary, in these projected foreign ventures, as in his huge expenditure on the casting of cannon, and his forfeiture of the earldom of Ross in 1475, James III was the true son of his warrior father.

The problems associated with James's kingship lay not so much in his desire to pursue foreign adventures as in his failure to govern effectively at home. Uniquely among Medieval Scottish kings, James III rarely left Edinburgh in the 19 years of his adult rule. For instance, he did not go out on justice ayres (circuits) in person, with the result that feuds in the localities spread unchecked – Cunningham against Montgomery in Ayrshire, Drummond against Murray in Strathearn, Huntly against Ross in the North-east.

By 1479 parliament was begging the King to intervene to curb feuding all over the country. But he did not do so. Worse, in a kingdom unused to regular taxation, James made constant efforts to raise money for the Crown by this means, and was criticised time and again by parliament for doing so. And James's granting of remissions for serious crimes – for a price – served to undermine another major royal domestic function, the delivery of even-handed justice.

Parliament's criticisms of royal policies frequently hint at the real nature of the problem – the personality of the king. It would seem that James III had a dangerously exalted view of the nature of Stewart kingship.

This is certainly seen in his adoption, as early as 1469, of an 'imperial' theme – that is, following the dictum of the political theorist Bartolus of Sassoferrato that the king is emperor in his own realm – and in his appearing on his later silver coinage wearing an imperial crown, rather than a coronet, on what has been described as 'the first Renaissance coin portrait outside Italy'. At a ►



■ The King's Danish bride, Margaret, as painted in another panel of the Trinity Altarpiece.



■ The body of James II – who was killed by an exploding cannon at the siege of Roxburgh Castle – lies in state, while his son, the boy James III is introduced to the nobles of Scotland.

► more prosaic level, James III failed to reward his long-suffering supporters. Not only was he parsimonious, a hoarder rather than a giver, but he also contrived to make money for the Crown by debasing the coinage, introducing the notorious 'black money' – a copper currency with a highly-inflated face value – in 1480.

The charge most often levelled against James III by later writers is that he relied for advice on low-born favourites rather than his 'natural' counsellors, the nobility. This is only partially true. A glance at the personnel of the royal council in any year of the reign shows that the principal offices of state were divided among high-ranking magnates and influential clergy.

However, certain individuals close to the King were clearly hated. Most prominent among these was William Scheves, who started the 1470s as a court servant employed, among other tasks, in sewing the king's shirts, and ended the decade as Archbishop of St Andrews – royal 'fixer' and

counter-signatory to many of the King's letters. Most notorious was Thomas Cochrane, probably not the stone-mason of later legend, but rather an ambitious southern laird who was used as a royal troubleshooter in the North-East, acquiring the revenues of the earldom of Mar, building a stronghold for himself at Auchindoun in Moray, and greatly upsetting powerful local nobility, including Huntly and Ogilvy.

The careers of these royal familiars may partially explain the appalling relations between James III and his family. Unfortunate in being the first Stewart king since the late 14th century to have to deal with surviving adult brothers – Alexander, Duke of Albany, and John, Earl of Mar – King James cannot be absolved of blame for his treatment of his family.

Probably anticipating an unconvincing charge of treason laid against him in 1479, Albany fled to France; Mar was executed and forfeited in mysterious circumstances early in 1480 (later



■ Magnificent gift: When James III took the throne in 1460, his former guardian Bishop James Kennedy of St Andrews commissioned Jean Mayelle to make this mace, given to the King's foundation, St Salvator's College.

tradition had him drowned in a brewer's vat in a house in Edinburgh's Canongate); the King's sisters, Mary and Margaret, openly defied James in the crisis of 1482-3.


His queen, Margaret of Denmark, whose Italian biographer described her as having greater political ability than her husband, dutifully provided James with three sons before 1480, but she subsequently sided with the King's brother Albany in the 1482 crisis, probably to protect the rights of her eldest son (the Duke of Rothsay and future James IV). And it should be added that it was that eldest son who rebelled against and defeated his father in battle in 1488.

James III was vulnerable to these assaults largely because he had performed a diplomatic U-turn in 1474, making the first firm peace and alliance of the century with England. He failed, however, to pick up the French alliance as a form of insurance (it had not been renewed since 1448) with the result that, when Edward IV of England tired of the peace of 1474, James III was left without a foreign ally when he sought to summon a disaffected population to oppose an English ally now turned enemy.

The sequel was James III's arrest at Lauder in July, 1482, by leaders of the Scottish army, including his own Master of the Household, Colin, Earl of Argyll. It was

■ The imperial crown on his coin head said much about the King.



A portrait of James III, King of Scots, wearing a black cap with a gold ornament and a red tunic under a white and gold robe. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right.

Portrait of a weak king. James learned nothing from his close call at Lauder Bridge.

TIMELINE

1452

James III is born in the Bishop of St Andrews' episcopal castle.

1463

Death of his mother, Mary of Gueldres, sees the young king become a political pawn, being shipped between James Kennedy, Bishop of St Andrews, and the Boyd family of Kilmarnock.

1469

James III assumes his throne, and the Boyds estates are forfeited.

1474

James signs the first peace treaty of the century with Edward IV of England.

1479

The King's brother Alexander, Duke of Albany, flees to France to avoid a trumped-up charge of treason.

1480

James's other brother, John, Earl of Mar, is executed. The king adds to his growing unpopularity by effectively devaluing the currency with introduction of notorious 'black money'.


1482

Beginning of the end for James as his disillusioned officers take him prisoner at Lauder, hanging several of his hated courtiers from the town's bridge. James spends two months in Edinburgh Castle, fearing for his life, before being released.

1488

James III is killed after fleeing in defeat from the Battle of Sauchieburn.

When he made the first firm peace of the century with England, he failed to pick up the old French alliance as a form of insurance

A circular medal with a profile of a king, likely James III, and some illegible text.

also the settling of old scores with some of the familiars, including Cochrane, who were hanged over Lauder Bridge.

The King feared for his own life during a two-month-long incarceration in Edinburgh Castle, but he survived the Lauder crisis because the various disaffected factions were not prepared to go so far as to remove him.

Unfortunately, James seemed to have learned

nothing from his close call. Though he renewed the French alliance in 1484, he never abandoned his obsessive, and at times obsequious, efforts to make truces or paces with England – in 1484, 1486 and 1487.

At the same time, he pursued all those at home who had opposed him, or failed to take his part convincingly, during the Lauder crisis.

In the early months of 1488, a large and growing coalition of disaffected nobles, headed by Prince James, heir to the throne, challenged the King.

The end came on what contemporaries called 'the field of Stirling', a battle later described as Sauchieburn but in fact fought very close to the site of Bruce's great victory at Bannockburn in 1314.

Conscious of this, James III brought Bruce's sword with him to the field, but this talisman failed to work. In the only battle in Scottish history in which the royal standard was hoisted above both armies, King James was overwhelmed and killed, either on the field or fleeing from it.

His legacy to his victorious son was his treasure – over £24,000 was later accounted for – and an object lesson in how not to govern. ●

The king is kidnapped



■ The hanging of James III's 'advisers' by rebellious nobles at Lauder Bridge in 1482 marked the beginning of the King's downfall.

Incensed by his economic policies and inept advisers, a group of nobles seized King James III as he moved into battle. But the royal helpers came off worst

King James III's personal reign is mostly remembered as lacking in bloodshed, save for one terrible summer day in 1482. James was an extremely unpopular monarch, and on July 22, 1482, a plot to kidnap and imprison him was put into action.

Although successful in its main aim, the kidnap itself resulted in a bloody massacre in which several members of the royal retinue were savagely executed.

The episode took place while James was en route to lead the nation into war against a major invasion of southern Scotland by the rogue Duke of Albany and his English allies.

As James summoned the Scottish host to the muster point of Lauder, near Berwick, he was arrogantly calling up men who were being asked to risk their lives in support of a monarch whose domestic policies were disliked, and whose foreign policy had produced the almost certain military calamity now looming in front of them.

It was no wonder that a large section of the Scottish host

preferred to align themselves with a scheme aimed at removing the king and averting disaster.

As James approached his waiting army on the highway just outside Lauder, his party was ambushed while crossing Lauder Bridge by a group of nobles led by James's three Stewart half-uncles – Andrew, Bishop-elect of Moray, John, Earl of Atholl and James, Earl of Buchan.

The king was seized and bundled off to imprisonment in Edinburgh Castle, but those in his entourage who hadn't managed to flee were less lucky – they were bound up and hanged over the bridge itself.

This astonishingly brutal episode was the result of a deep lack of faith in James's abilities among many of his nobles.

Many 16th century chroniclers insisted that a leading factor motivating his kidnappers was that James favoured the counsel of low-born familiars upon whom he lavished favours, lands and rewards, in preference of his 'natural' advisers, the nobility.

The same chroniclers argued that these nobles all shared the single laudable object of freeing the king

from rotten advisers and improving the governing of the realm.

But this verdict, based on bogus sources and prejudices of the time, is not an accurate assessment of the kidnappers' motives.

The three known 'advisers' who were hanged at Lauder probably had less influence on the king than the nobles feared. Thomas Preston, Thomas Cochran and William Roger all happened to be in the king's entourage on that day, and so were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Among the conspirators' real grievances, however, were James's drastic attempts to raise money for the defence of the Crown during the two-year long war against England, by debasing the Scots coinage.

This undermined the strength of the Scottish economy and the nobles' own personal wealth.

Put simply, those behind the Lauder Bridge plot feared James's arrogance and vindictiveness; were thoroughly alarmed by the political situation in 1482; and reckoned their best chance of survival, and perhaps advancement, was to coerce the king.

Unsurprisingly, several weeks after the Lauder incident – with the king incarcerated in Edinburgh Castle – there was a dramatic change in elite government personnel, as the chief conspirators attempted to force their way into higher offices. The youngest of the

Stewart half-uncles, Andrew, became Privy Seal and it emerged later that he had designs on the archbishopric of St Andrews.

His brothers, Buchan and Atholl, probably reckoned that their actions would prevent a military disaster, secure their positions in the royal household, perhaps lead to the acquisition of further titles, and give them dominant roles in the government.

The timing of Lauder Bridge was critical for the conspirators' ambitions, as their treason was obscured by the threat of Albany's imminent invasion.

The seizure of James as he prepared to wage war with his brother could subsequently be portrayed as an effort to reconcile the two sides, thus relieving a major national crisis.

But when the English invasion floundered, James was re-installed, and several of the conspirators soon found themselves out in the political wilderness.

This was notably the case with Buchan who, by the following year, was deep in treasonable negotiations with Albany and England's King Edward IV – actions for which he was exiled for three years.

In the end, the episode at Lauder Bridge probably averted a terrible war, although in itself it was brutal and severe – and it ultimately failed to permanently remove the unpopular James. ●

THE 'LEECH' WHO FELL TO EARTH

Mixing chemistry and mysticism, alchemy was near to religion – but it didn't save James's Italian birdman as he tried to fly from Stirling to France with 'ane great pair of wingis'



■ Stirling Castle was the birdman's perch and take-off point. But de Falcusis didn't get far.

In March, 1504, a mysterious Italian named John Damian de Falcusis became the most extraordinary beneficiary of King James IV. The 'French leech', as he was known to some, had convinced James of the usefulness of the science of alchemy, which claimed fine gold could be made from base metal.

Damian was made Abbot of Tongland, in Galloway, and for the next few years had his experiments financed by the Crown.

On March 19, 1507, when four exhausted Italian minstrels staggered into Tongland at the end of the royal pilgrimage from Edinburgh to Whithorn, they would not have been greeted by their countryman, the Abbot – for Damian was in his laboratory at Stirling Castle.

There he sought the 'quintessence' – the elixir of life – consuming for his experiments large quantities of 'aqua vitae' supplied by the Crown, and no doubt preparing for his most celebrated exploit, his attempt to fly from the battlements of Stirling Castle to France in September of that year. But this experiment, as with those to produce gold, was to end in failure, and Damian seems to have cost James a great deal of money.

Although the King wasn't judged harshly for his distribution of monastic wealth among friends, supporters or court hangers-on, Damian was an exception – due mainly to the vitriol of the great contemporary poet, William Dunbar.

Dunbar viciously satirised Damian in two poems, portraying him as a fool. It seems that a large part of the poet's verdict was based on Dunbar's own jealousy and disillusionment at court. While others like Damian received backing from the king, Dunbar's work is littered

with bitter references to his own failure to get a benefice which would enable him to live well.

As appearances counted for a lot in those days, Dunbar's feelings are understandable, although they have created a distorted image of Damian which historians have often carelessly accepted at face value. Damian must have impressed the King, as even his unsuccessful attempt to fly from Stirling to France with 'ane great pair of wingis' – and Dunbar's savage description of it – did not lose him royal favour.

According to one source, the King accepted Damian's bizarre explanation that there were some hen feathers in the wings of his device which yearned for the midden of the soil and not the skies.

Although Damian's contraption might sound laughable, it should be noted that a friend and compatriot of his, the painter Leonardo da Vinci, also made plans for a wooden flying machine which would have met a similarly inelegant end had flight been attempted.

Damian continued his experiments, and James tried to secure him from poverty by promising a pension of 200 ducats from the fruits of the abbey when he resigned it in 1509.

Alchemists like Damian are often portrayed now as charlatans, but many were in fact pioneers of modern chemistry and pharmacy.

Much of the misunderstanding of alchemy comes from its combining of chemistry with mysticism. As such it has been derided as more of a religion than a science – but it can only be judged in its historical context.

James IV's Europe was a continent surcharged with mystical theology and philosophy, doctrines

which sought to explain the mysteries of nature and the universe. Established religion was failing to provide answers to such fundamental questions, so alchemy developed in response.

The alchemists conceived the universe to be a unity in which all material bodies were convertible one into another. Their theology concerning the evolution of metal was that, by analogy, gold was nature's perfection.

Gold kept its beauty permanently and was the symbol of the good man, 'a noble metal.' Silver was also termed 'noble' but regarded as less mature than gold, representing man at a slightly lower stage of development.

Lead, on the other hand, was a symbol of man in a sinful and unregenerate condition.

The alchemists' most sought-after tool was the 'Philosopher's Stone', the very 'essence' of gold. It was in many accounts, as Christ is of the soul's perfection, the most quintessentially perfect substance in creation.

When placed in an alcohol solution, the stone was thought to be the elixir of life, restoring a man again to the flower of youth. Damian attempted this in his laboratory at Stirling Castle.

Alchemy did later attract many frauds, but just as we shouldn't dismiss Damian on the strength of Dunbar's prejudice, we should also appreciate alchemy in the context of its time.

Fantastic experiments and fabulous flying machines were products of an era in which imaginative and inquiring minds literally tried to leap out into the universe – but, sadly, were far ahead of the methods, materials and mathematics of the day. ●

When Scots football



■ Glasgow University's Outer Court with Great Stair to the Fore Hall. It was founded in 1451 and the city had three Medieval grammar schools.

The virtues of a Scots schooling have been hailed across centuries. The jury may be out on whether the legend goes on, but its roots were strongly European – with the accent on Latin and Greek

The question of just how well educated Scots were before the Protestant Reformation (1560) is not easy to answer, because of the shortage of original documentation. But the fact that the records are now silent does not mean there was not once something to shout about, and there may have been many schools that have long since disappeared into oblivion.

Nevertheless, a sufficient number of documents have survived to tell an important tale – that education was a thriving industry in pre-Reformation Scotland.

It was, of course, an industry with a profoundly different shape from the present one, because it suited a society that was itself profoundly different. Before the Reformation there were universities in St Andrews (founded 1411/12), Glasgow (founded 1451) and Aberdeen (where King's College was founded in 1495), and the students at these universities could not have arrived wholly unlettered. All university teaching was done in Latin and the students must have therefore arrived with sufficient knowledge to be able to cope. Their linguistic competence was nurtured in Scottish schools.

Dr John Durkan, Scotland's top sleuth in the field of Scottish pre-Reformation documents, has discovered more than 1,000 schoolmasters during the two centuries before the Reformation and, given the fact that these may be a rather small

proportion of the total, we are clearly looking at a substantial provision in the educational field.

Much of this provision came via the good offices of the Church, which in the nature of the case had a fair proportion of well-educated people in it. And in fact numerous schools were integrated into larger ecclesiastical establishments, with churchmen doubling as schoolmasters. This is one of the reasons why it has been easy to miss their presence.

Before the Reformation, Scotland enjoyed a lively culture in ecclesiastical music – with its fair share of fine composers, and of choirs to sing their music and suitable occasions for exercising those talents. There seem to have been numerous 'song schools' in Scotland, especially associated to cathedrals but also to other kinds of church, such as the collegiate churches – no fewer than 40 in Scotland – where boys were educated in musical arts, including choral singing.

They also learned the three Rs, and since the liturgy was in Latin the boys would acquire a sense of the rhythm of the language. In many places, too, they were also introduced to the rudiments of Latin grammar within the song school.

Each parish was supposed to have such a school, but we have no proof that was enforced.

No doubt they flourished in the better populated areas, but even rural parts must have had their fair share, as there are records of students going up to university from sparsely-

was played in Latin



■ John Mair from Haddington lecturing in Paris in 1505. As one of the greatest thinkers of his era, he became the principal of Glasgow University.

populated and remote rural areas, such as the Western Isles

One step up from the song schools were the grammar schools. The 'grammar' in the name is of course the grammar of Latin, the language of the Church, of the universities, of educated people everywhere. It was the language of Europe, largely because it was the language of the Church of Rome, and its widespread acceptance meant that people in Scotland could travel anywhere in Europe (and even then the Scots were great travellers) and converse with those they met.

Pupils at the grammar school attached to King's College in Aberdeen prepared a welcome in Greek for James V on the occasion of his visit to the city in 1540.

Grammar schools were widespread during the Medieval period. Among the many places where they were to be found were Aberdeen, Arbroath, Ayr, Banff, Biggar, Brechin, Crichton, Dumbarton, Dumfries, Dundee, Dunfermline, Edinburgh

(two), Glasgow (three), Haddington, Inverness, Kirkwall, Leith, Linlithgow, Montrose, Musselburgh, Paisley, Peebles, Perth, St Andrews (three), and Stirling. In addition, many of these places also had song schools.

It is also recorded that there was provision for the education of girls – at Aberdeen and Edinburgh, for example – so we can accept that some Scots girls could read, though rather fewer would have been able to write.

One hopes for their sake that the disciplining they experienced was not as brutal as that dealt out by the St Andrews graduate George Litstar, who taught at the grammar school of Haddington. It was sufficient to cause distress to his pupil John Mair, later principal of Glasgow University and one of the greatest thinkers of his era. Nevertheless, the quality of the instruction he received is not in doubt. Years later, Mair recalled Haddington as 'the town which fostered the beginnings of my own studies, and in whose kindly embraces I was nourished as a novice with the sweetest milk of the art of grammar'.

Not all of the schoolmasters were of the same intellectual standard as the best known of them, Robert Henryson, student at Glasgow, master at Dunfermline grammar school, and one of Scotland's half-dozen finest poets. But even so, the evidence, taken as a whole, suggests that the provision of education in Scotland was rather good when compared to that in the rest of Europe.

Scotland's greatest philosopher is John Duns ►



■ Gone: the old Glasgow University building, with its tower pictured from its Inner Court.

Scottish academics brought from Paris their experience of best practice...



■ Aberdeen University's distinguished history starts in 1495, when King's College was founded. The students could not have arrived wholly unlettered.

► Scotus (1266-1308), from the Border town of Duns. In 1521 the Haddingtonian John Mair wrote of Scotus that 'when he was no more than a boy, but had been grounded in grammar, he was taken by two Franciscan friars to Oxford, for at that time there existed no university in Scotland'.

Scotus was, in the judgment of Mair 'and of most of the academics in Europe' a man 'of the loftiest understanding and the keenest powers in debate'. His departure was a big loss to Scotland, and he was undoubtedly correct in his diagnosis of the problem – the lack of a university. However, from the early 15th century, when the first of our universities was founded at St Andrews, the situation was rapidly transformed.

Within a short time students were being taught here at a very high standard – in Latin of course. Latin with everything.

Evidently some students at St Andrews in 1415 were heard yelling at each other in Scots while playing football, for the minutes of the Arts Faculty primly reported a request to the students that they speak to each other in Latin on the football pitch as well as in the classroom. Try insisting on that today!

For a considerable time the greater part of the teaching at Scottish universities was done by men who had studied at universities on the Continent before returning to educate the new generation

men such as the Dundonian Hector Boece (1465-1536) who resigned his professorship at Paris to become the first principal of Aberdeen University, where he worked from 1497 till his death; George Lockert of Ayr (almost certainly educated at the grammar school there), who rose to become professor of theology at Paris, before taking up a post as rector of St Andrews; William Manderston (1485-1552), a Glasgow graduate, who enrolled at Paris and duly rose to become rector of Paris and then of St Andrews.

The most influential Continental university was that of Paris which, since the 13th century, had played host to cohorts of Scottish students, and had in return benefited from the 17 or 18 Scots who had been rectors there during the pre-Reformation period.

It was talent of this high quality that was placed at the service of our three Medieval universities. And St Andrews and Glasgow in particular mirrored Paris at the organisational level, as the Scottish academics brought over from France their experience of best academic practice.

When the reformers set about the organisation of education in Scotland after they came to power in 1560 there could be no doubt they had a firm foundation on which to build. ●

■ The first of the major Scottish universities, St Andrews, which was founded in 1411.





■ They wore the thistle badge with pride: the first-ever Scottish international rugby team that beat England in Edinburgh in March, 1871.

WHY THE THISTLE?

They say it saved Scots by pricking Vikings. True or not, it lives on as a logo for our land

It adorns Sean Connery's forearm, one-pour coins and stamps. Football clubs from Partick to Inverness – and the Scottish rugby side – wear it with pride. It is, of course, the thistle, a symbol of our nation for more than 500 years.

James III first stamped the thistle on the nation's coins in 1470. In England, at the same time, the War of the Roses raged and the Scots adopted the thistle in response to the roses of England.

Botanists have long pondered which thistle the Scots chose, for there are several native varieties: the musk and the melancholy; the spear and the stemless; Our Lady's and the cotton thistle. All have been considered, but to some extent this misses the point, for the Scottish thistle is an emblem – archetypal rather than a genuine natural variety – for the nation.

National emblems were the latest Renaissance fashion, re-inventions of the classical symbols of ancient Rome, but now given a uniquely national twist. The Scots were conscious they had never been conquered by the Romans and as such had never been part of the Classical world that was being revived. So they may have intentionally chosen a distinctly unclassical plant, in the form of the thistle, to highlight their 'barbarous' origins.

Another dimension of Renaissance emblems was the motto. For the thistle it's that well-known

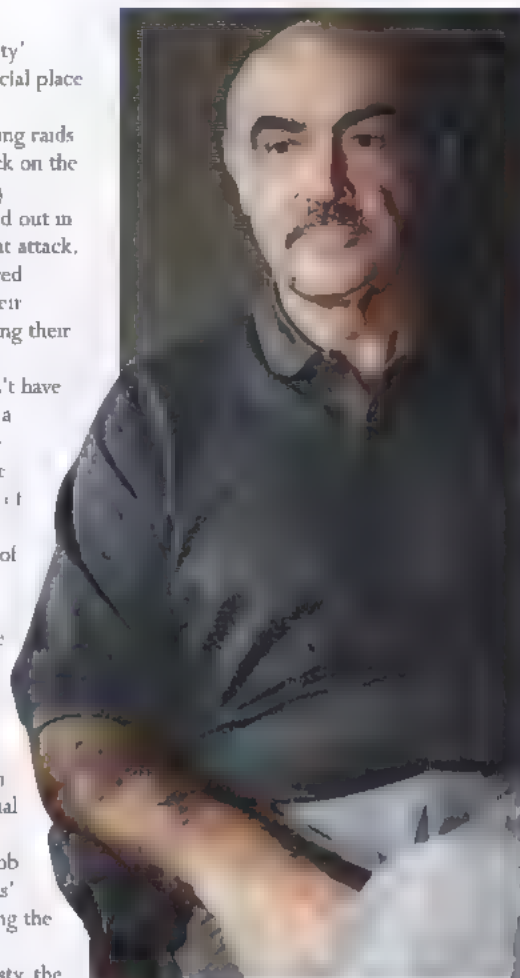
piece of Latin 'Nemo me impune lacessit' roughly, 'let no-one assault me with impunity'.

Popular legend accords the thistle a special place in Scottish history right back at the very foundation of the kingdom during the Viking raids. The Vikings were planning a surprise attack on the Scots but the patriotic plant got in the way. Treading on them, the Vikings raiders cried out in pain – warning the Scots of their imminent attack. Historical fiction perhaps, but it has inspired generations of Scots to crush thistles in their hands in pursuit of another fiction – proving their Scottish identity.

Renaissance observers probably wouldn't have seen it that way. For them, the thistle was a chivalric symbol, a badge of status, for the Scottish kings. James V had it built into the gateway of Linlithgow Palace in the badge of the knightly order of St Andrew, or the Thistle, along with all the other emblems of the chivalric orders he belonged to – the English order of the Garter, the French order of St Michael and the Golden Fleece – in a public display of his social credibility.

When James VII revived the order in 1687 to reward his privy councillors, he removed the Protestant congregation from Holyrood Abbey Church and had the special Thistle Chapel constructed for the order. When he fled the country, a Protestant mob broke into the chapel to 'smash the knights' stalls and the marble flooring before looting the royal tombs.

Despite the demise of the Stewart dynasty, the thistle survived as a national symbol to become synonymous with the nation as a whole. ■



■ A proud Scot: actor Sean Connery has the thistle tattooed on his forearm.

'Savage' Lords of the

The impression that the Lordship was only about warfare is false. It was a sophisticated and stylish culture

The Medieval Lordship of the Isles had a stylish and sophisticated culture that often eclipsed the rest of Scotland. Chronicles and other documentary evidence from the Lowlands on how life progressed in the Lordship is scant and misleading, concerning itself almost exclusively with times when the Gaels threatened royal authority and disorder in Scotland was rampant.

This has created a false impression that the Lordship was composed of an uncultured people who knew only warfare, strife and savagery. While raiding and conflict was indeed a fact of political life, the Gaels' culture was rich, vibrant and often more sophisticated than that of its Lowland counterpart.

The most striking examples of this culture are those fashioned from the rock of the Highlands.

Visitors to the western seaboard of Scotland are struck by the remarkable group of stone monuments that dot the landscape.

The style of carving was fostered at the religious foundation of Iona, and seems to have grown with the sponsorship of the old house of Islay.

Ancient monuments can shed light on cultural history just as plainly as written text, and this is nowhere more true than in the territory of the Lordship.

As well as 'Celtic Crosses' there are pictorial slabs, stones and other decorated monuments which give clues as to dress, cultural tastes, the military, government and so on.

As well as Islay, the governmental centre of the Lordship, there is a rich store of ornately-carved stones in Knapdale, Kintyre, Gigha, Oronsay, Tiree, Iona, Mull and Morvern, all of which are within the bounds of the ancient Lordship. But there are others – known as 'outhers' – which are not.

Medieval stone-curtain castles like those surviving at Tioram near Moidart, Kismuil in Castlebay, Barra, and Borge on Benbecula are towering reminders of the greatness once attained by the Lordship.

Besides making wonderful structures, the Gaels were noted as pre-eminent in music, and King

■ **'The people of the isles have a genius for music' – and they expressed it often on this kind of harp.**



Isles loved their arts

James IV was later a patron of Highland harpists

The lords had families of hereditary harpists in their service. One such family, from Kintyre, had the surname Ó Senog. Their special position meant that they were granted lands and privileges.

Later, the visiting scholar Martin Martin would write in 1690 that people of the isles 'have a great genius for music'. Scholars believe that the special characteristics of Scots music are found in their purest form in tunes surviving from the Lordship.

There are a few among collected Hebridean folk songs in praise of the Lords of the Isles that have survived for more than five centuries.

Along with music there was a vast wealth of poetry, some of which still survives in oral and written collections.

The MacMhurichs were the hereditary poets of the Lords of the Isles, and they claimed descent from an Irish poet called Muireach O'Daly who lived in County Sligo in the early 1200s.

The legend of Muireach's life is that he incurred the wrath of the head of the O'Donnel family by killing with an axe a steward who had been sent to collect certain dues from him. Muireach was insulted that O'Donnel had sent someone of such a lowly rank.

Seeking revenge, O'Donnel chased Muireach from place to place in Ireland and eventually the poet fled to Scotland.

He wrote a beautiful poem in praise of a knife that a friend gave him on his flight.

My friend's skian is on my left,

I like a lady I love,

A lady of the ladies of the Southland,

Of fairy ivory well carven

A gentle Munster woman at my girdle

Fair, clean-rimmed, gray of flank

While hiding in Scotland he lost his wife and wrote a lament for her, and the great Gaelic Book

of the Dean of Lismore contains several of his other works. The Dean's collection of Gaelic poetry dates from very shortly after the fall of the Lordship, and gives an idea of the popular tastes during its time, as it includes a large number of poems in ballad form on themes of older stories.

Beloved by the Gael in the time of the Lordship was literature including three great cycles of ancient stories. These were the Mythological Cycle, the noble cycle of stories of Cuchulain and the heroes of Ulster, and the collection of tales about Finn McCoul and the Feine, his descendants.

Some of the manuscripts are of the 14th and 15th centuries, others copies of early works. In addition there are two 14th century Gaelic versions of the destruction of Troy, a version of the story of the Argonauts that can't be much later, and an even earlier version of the tale of Pharsaba.

Such tales of ancient Greece were appreciated by the Gaels of Scotland well before the Renaissance brought them into general favour in Western Europe. But Gaelic cultural and social sophistication was by no means confined to the arts. Essential to Highland society and culture were civil offices – including physicians, judges, officials and manufacturers.

The office of hereditary physician to the Lord of the Isles was held by a family variously known as Beaton and MacBeath. A drink of the bree in which a magical white snake had been cooked is how the first Beaton physician acquired his medical skill, according to one fabulous tale.

The Beatons continued to hold land in Islay by right of their office of Chief Physician of the Isles through the post Lordship troubles of the 16th century, until they were eventually disposed of.

Another branch of the family lived in Mull, and

was diligent in collecting and recording medical lore, and to it is due the unusually large number of Gaelic treatises on medicine that still survive.

Some of these manuscripts are scholarly pieces, quoting references methodically and showing wide reading such as Galen and Hippocrates. And a treatise on enumerating the ancient rights and responsibilities of a physician also survives.

Information on other offices is scant. Judges and a system of legal administration were in place, and the Gaelic title of Brehon judge seems to have outlived the Lordship, occurring on a later Gaelic charter. Records were kept by the MacDuffies, though sadly none has survived.

The MacKinnons were the marshals, who adjusted weights and measures, and in Skye fulfilled a variety of judicial functions. Public speaking, it's said, was the duty of the MacLaverbies.

Piping, though bagless until the late Medieval period, had important military and naval functions, and was done by the MacArthurs. Representatives of the family held lands in Sleat and also at Proag, in Islay.

Sword-making was carried out by the MacEachearns at Kilchoman in Islay, and the MacRurys in Skye. And the MacSporrans, from whom the famous feature of modern Highland dress takes its name, were the purse-bearers.

Sadly, when the Lordship fell in 1493, the cohesion which it had provided for Gaelic culture and society soon disintegrated.

By the late 16th century an attitude of ignorant superiority to all things Gaelic on the part of many among the learned, cultured and those in authority in the Lowlands, formed the basis of the systematic destruction of a magnificent culture that once flourished under the Lordship of the Isles. ●

■ Medieval stone-curtain castles like this one – Tioram at Moidart near Mallaig – are reminders of the greatness attained by the Lordship



Scots beauty with

The splendour that the young King James V found in France inspired him to bring elegance to Scotland's royal buildings. Palatial wasn't the word...

When today's tourists visit Scotland's royal palaces, even those which now lie in ruins, they would not be far wrong if they thought they were viewing the royal chateaux of France or some Renaissance buildings of Italy.

There is a sound reason for this. The cause lies in the 16th century, when King James V reigned for only 14 years but imposed his taste on this country's royal buildings.

This James had the worst possible start to his reign, succeeding his father when he was only 17 months old and being 'coupit from hand to hand' while first his mother,

Margaret Tudor, then a succession of self-interested nobles exercised power on his behalf.

After two years as a virtual prisoner of his stepfather Archibald Douglas, the sixth Earl of Angus, James came into his own in 1528, escaping from Falkland Palace disguised as a groom, and using his hereditary powers to take his revenge on the nobles who had abused him. They called him 'James the ill-beloved', but that was just their point of view.

He had a reputation for sympathy towards his commoners. But it was a visit to France in 1536 to seek a bride that gave the extravagant and

acquisitive James some idea of how stylishly the royal life could be lived.

In Scotland, he had inherited a chain of residences that were still Medieval in concept, built for defence and with few pretensions towards beauty. His father, James IV, had started to improve things with a programme of works at Holyrood, Linlithgow, Stirling and Falkland. But the splendour the young James experienced in France at the court of Francis I must have blown his mind.

The French king was a great enthusiast for the Italian Renaissance style of building, developed in the wealthy city-states of northern Italy and seen at its most spectacular in



a French accent

Venice. The French Crown obviously had the funds to indulge in this sort of architectural makeover, but the Scottish Crown did not. The years of James's minority had left the country all but bankrupt, so the young king would have to raise funds before he could live in the French manner to which wanted to become accustomed.

As his wife (with a substantial dowry, of course) James chose the sickly Princess Madeleine, daughter of the French monarch. Six months after their wedding she was dead. A year later he acquired another French wife, Mary of Guise, along with another dowry. But if James wanted to bring the stylishness of

the Continent to the Stewart court in Scotland, it would take more than a couple of dowries to fund the operation. So he began to raise taxes, and his scheme was on the way.

Most of the changes that gave Scotland's royal palaces the form we see today were carried out in a short, four-year period that started in 1538, the year he returned from France. To carry out his grand design, he had a friend in Sir James Hamilton of Innart, who happened to be a skilful architect as well as a 'fiery noble'. James hired him as his Master of Works.

One of his first commissions was the improvement of Linlithgow

Palace, which had been a royal residence of sorts from the 11th century, standing magnificently on a raised peninsula in the town's loch. Various monarchs had added to it over the centuries, but James V who was born there made important changes, including the building of what became known as the King's Fountain in the courtyard in the newly-built entry, armorial

carvings were added to show the orders of knighthood to which the king belonged

The interior courtyard is full of delightful, decorative touches, and even Mary of Guise with her French upbringing described it as 'the most princely home' she had ever seen

The palace is now a sombre ruin, testimony to the fact that Scotland no longer had a resident sovereign ►



■ Linlithgow Palace is now a ruin, but it is still an impressive silhouette on the edge of the loch. Five centuries ago Mary of Guise, wife of James V, called Linlithgow 'the most princely home' she had ever seen.





■ The Palace of Holyrood House (above) – developed by James IV around 1503, though the hand of his son is seen in the stylish Renaissance west front.



■ After Oliver Cromwell stayed at Falkland Palace in Fife (left) part of it mysteriously burned down.

► after the Union of the Crowns

Charles I stayed there briefly, as did Oliver Cromwell and, indeed, Bonnie Prince Charlie for one surely uncomfortable night in 1745. Strangely, the palace had caught fire immediately after Cromwell's stay.

It was never certain that the burning was deliberate. But here's circumstantial evidence if you like...

Cromwell also stayed at Falkland Palace in Fife, and part of this royal residence also burned down after he

left during his Scottish campaign of the 17th century.

A century earlier, though, King James had put Sir James Hamilton to work at Falkland to create what became lauded as 'the earliest essay in full Renaissance architecture in Britain'.

The Master of Works brought in French craftsmen to work on the detailed ornamentation. New facades were built with Corinthian columns and medallion busts upon

some walls, and while some critics have described the mixture of styles as confusing, Falkland Palace has a special charm which is not grandiose.

It also includes a court for 'royal tennis', a game that originated in France. It is one of only two such courts to survive from the 16th century – the other is at Hampton Court on the Thames.

Sir James Hamilton of Finnart also designed Craignethan Castle, near Lanark, for James and did

fortification work at Blackness Castle on the Forth.

But unhappily for the talented Master of Works, he was found guilty of treason in 1540 on evidence which has never since become clear, and was beheaded.

His 'considerable fortune' then passed to the king who was, as we have said, always on the look-out for siller.

One of the most visited of Scotland's royal residences is the Palace of Holyroodhouse in

■ Falkland Palace (right) was 'Britain's earliest essay in full Renaissance architecture'.

The Scots king knew he had to raise the funds before he could live in the grand French manner to which he had become accustomed

Edinburgh. This was first developed around 1503 by James IV, who wanted a more civilised place than the royal apartments in Edinburgh Castle

The hand of his son James V is also seen here in a tower and the stylish Renaissance west front. But following English attacks in the 'Rough Wooing' of 1544, and a disastrous fire in 1650, the palace has been largely rebuilt

Nevertheless, James and his father seem to have preferred Stirling Castle as a residence and power-base. Under the Stewarts, this rock-perched fortress has seen much blood and thunder – murders, executions and assassinations

On this towering rock, within the castle perimeter, James V improved another palace in the Renaissance style with a decorative facade. French masons were once more involved. Some of the allegorical figures sculpted in stone have a sexual aspect which, even three centuries later, caused an architect to condemn them as obscene and 'the fruits of a revolting imagination'

But the next door Great Hall is one of the most magnificent and beautifully-proportioned Medieval buildings to survive in Scotland. Although it went through hard times as a barracks block and riding school, a costly programme of work has restored its hammer-beam ceiling to give us a glimpse of the noble style James brought with him from France. ●



Enriching ideas that were also dangerous

The Renaissance marked the end of the Middle Ages and the start of modern Europe – and Scotland was at the forefront



■ Head of a king – 1540
carved oak roundel from Stirling Castle
that shows finer-than-usual artistry.

The Renaissance wasn't just Michelangelo's painting of the Sistine Chapel. It was also an intellectual revolution that, with the invention of the cannon and the printing press, changed Europe. Scotland had its own version that heralded the transformation of the Medieval kingdom into the nation recognisable today.

What was the Renaissance?

The Renaissance was the rediscovery of the classical knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome across Western Europe. Contacts with the Arab world through trade and crusade, along with the fall of Constantinople, led to many lost classical Latin texts coming to light.

This new knowledge provoked discussion and led to a critical re-evaluation of man's place in the world. It was a move from the divine and mysterious view of the world to one that was more human and practical.

God was not removed from the understanding of the world. But in humanism, as it came to be known, the focus was on man's place in God's creation, and practical problems such as how we were to govern ourselves. With the introduction of the printing press, these ideas ceased to be cloistered in the universities or the royal court and began to spread through Scottish society.

When was it?

The Renaissance is a name given to the era after the Middle Ages. Historians now call this the Early Modern period as it is believed to see the beginnings of our modern world. When exactly it began in Scotland is impossible to define. In Italy it is easy to see the birth of a classical culture, but the further north one travels in Europe the harder the distinction becomes.

In some respects James I (1424-37) was a Renaissance monarch laying down patterns that would develop over 100 years to when Scotland certainly had a Renaissance culture. For some historians, the reign of James III (1460-88) can be seen as the crucial turning point.

The Reformation of 1560 used to be seen as the time when cold Calvinism ended Scotland's flourishing Renaissance, but that is not the case. As we will see, many strands of Renaissance culture continued while others were re-invented in new forms. The Reformation, with its social concerns for order and its drive for literacy, can be seen as the daughter of the Renaissance, part of a longer cultural movement

that laid down the roots of the Scottish Enlightenment.

What drove it?

The royal court was the major motivating force and central focus of Scotland's Renaissance. As William Dunbar's poem *Remonstrance to the King* highlights, a vast range of talent was attracted to the court through its patronage. But it also provided international contacts across Europe to the courts of France and Burgundy.

The second force was education. Through Latin, the lingua franca of Europe, new ideas were transmitted to and from Scotland.

The establishment of Latin grammar schools and the founding of St Andrews, Glasgow and Aberdeen universities brought classical learning out of the monasteries into secular society. However, Scots should be given equal prominence to Latin. Intellectuals like Gavin Douglas translated the classics like the *Aeneid* into the vernacular to reach a wider audience.

The printing press was another force. Books had until then existed only in hand-copied manuscripts. To read them you would have to travel to the books, but now the books travelled to you as hundreds of copies could be printed and transported across the North Sea to Scotland.

Early books were expensive, but by the early 17th century affordable copies became available.

What practical forms did it take?

The practical applications of Renaissance ideas that had the greatest impact. In music, James Carver innovated polyphonic masses. In painting, contacts with the Low Countries started Scotland's painting tradition. In architecture, defensive castles were abandoned for palaces built like French chateaux. One example was Craigmethan Castle, designed by Sir James Hamilton of Finnart.

In religion, an educated laity proved more demanding, embracing a more personal faith and getting more concerned about the suffering of the poor.

Renaissance mathematics brought about a revolution in warfare. More accurate cannon, bigger warships and more cunningly-designed fortifications were increased as the monarchy could afford the latest designs giving them a technological power that any previous king could not match. When a noble could defy royal authority, his castle was over.

The power of knowledge

The Stewart monarchs were masters of branding Scottish identity by adopting the thistle as their symbol, stamping their imperial image on the



■ Defensive castles took on a French air: Sir James Hamilton of Finnart's Craignethan Castle was an ingenious complex of domestic and military architecture.



■ Inspired adaptation of refined Renaissance form to a more rugged northern culture: The Tree of Jesse from the Beaton Panels, probably made by Cardinal Beaton for Arbroath Abbey.

coinage and embarking on a patriotic publishing programme. The poetry of Scots makars like William Dunbar and Blind Harry were rushed into print. James V commissioned Hector Boece to write a Latin history of the Scots. He liked it so much he had it translated into Scots to bring the history of Scotland to the population.

But the new technology of printing also had its dangers. Books that weren't officially approved flowed in, bringing new and potentially dangerous theological ideas, such as Protestantism.

The cult of chivalry

The new firepower and educated professionals prompted changes in the politics of power. The great magnates were joined at court by men whose wealth and status was determined by their usefulness to the king – and dependent upon him.

Lavish spending displayed their power, as impressing became the key to success. Tournaments, feasting and ever more spectacular events projected that image. The cult of chivalry became popular, marking out the elite from the masses by their manners.

The Crown and nobility became entangled in a need for more money; land began to change hands; the church was squeezed for revenue, and ever-increasing taxation became a regular fixture.

The many-headed monster

What the elite feared most was the many-headed monster of the people. For most Scots, life remained essentially rural and agricultural but economic changes began to transform society.

The 'muddling sort' – lairds, lawyers and merchants – start to rise by providing the nobility with worldly goods.

Scotland wasn't wealthy but wool, animal skins, salt, fish and coal were exported across the North Sea in return for luxury products like fine cloth, tapestries and paintings.

Merchants established trading colonies in the Low Countries, Scandinavia, the Baltic and France and sent goods back to the expanding east coast burghs. Edinburgh dominated trade and became

Scotland's Renaissance capital. Professionals and craftsmen formed themselves into guilds active in burgh politics and began to join the nobles and clerics in the Scottish Parliament. By the early 16th century social change had altered the politics of power.

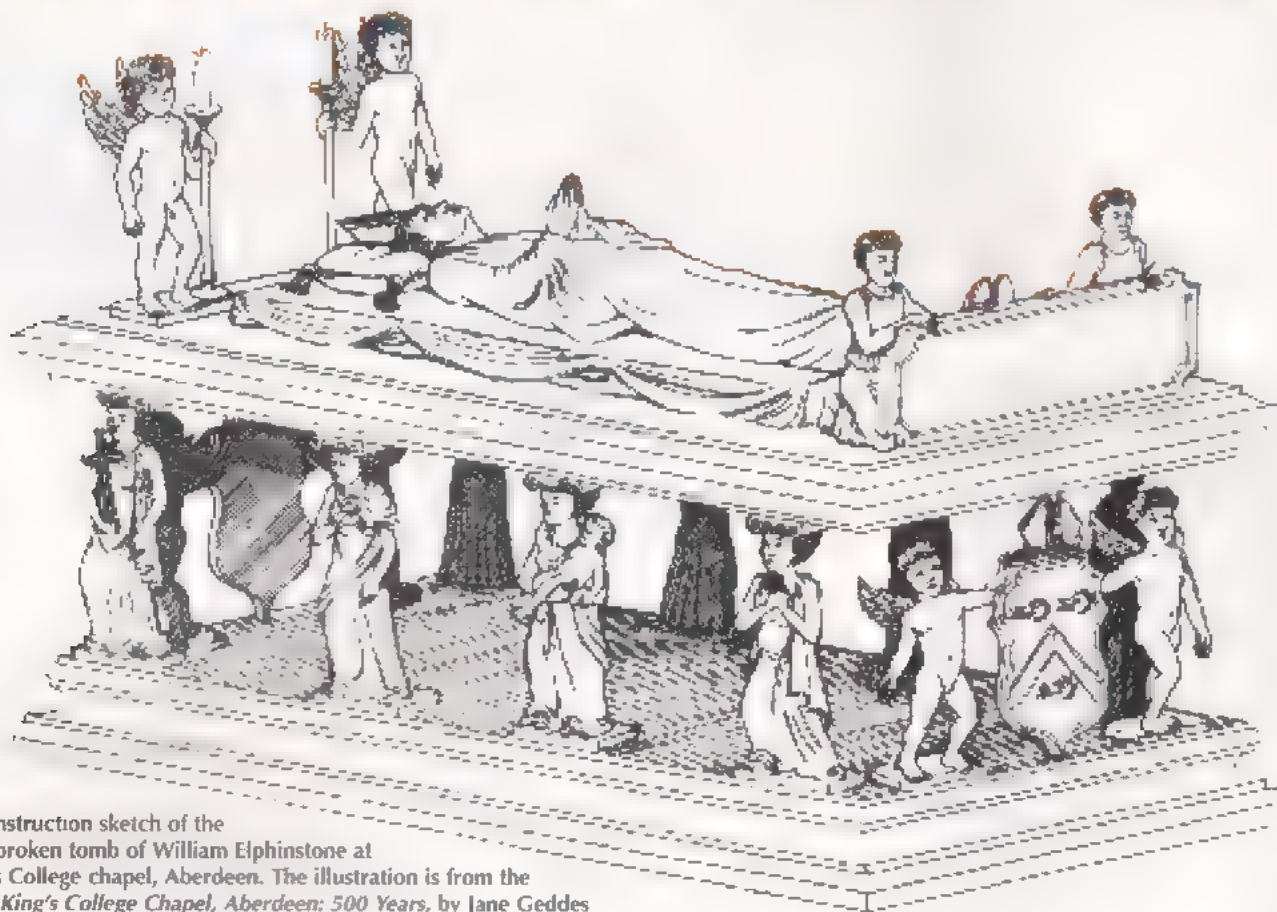
The idea of the commonweal developed – that policy was no longer simply a noble concern but should be for the wider common good. After all, the many-headed monster had to be controlled. ●

OF ALL THE KING'S MEN

Extract from Dunbar's poem Remonstrance to the King:

*Schir, ye have mony servitouris,
And officiaris of dyvers curis;
Kirkmen, courtmen, and craftsmen fyne;
Doctouris in jure, and medicyne;
Divinouris, rethoris, and philosophouris,
Astrologis, artistis, and oratouris;
Men of armes, and vailyeand knychtis,
And mony other gudlie wychtis;
Musicianis, menstralis, and mirrie singaris;
Chevalouris, cowandaris, and flingaris;
Canyouris, carvouris, and carpentaris,
Beildaris of barkis and ballingaris;
Masounis lyand upon the land,
And schipwrightis hewand upon the strand;
Glosing wrichtis, goldsmithis, and lapidaris,
Pryntouris, payntouris, and pottingaris;
And all of thair craft cunning,
And all at anis lawboring.*

Always one step ahead for the law



■ Reconstruction sketch of the now-broken tomb of William Elphinstone at King's College chapel, Aberdeen. The illustration is from the book *King's College Chapel, Aberdeen: 500 Years*, by Jane Geddes

A man of many parts with the trust of his king, William Elphinstone was a lawyer extraordinary and a bishop... who set down the law and set up a university

At first sight it would seem unlikely that a studious, gentle and somewhat reserved priest could have had a vital part to play in Scotland's recovery as it struggled to reforge its identity in the 15th century following the Wars of Independence.

But looking back on the efforts of James III and James IV to co-operate with a baronage of divided loyalties in recasting a crumbling government system, and to improve their subjects' education, we can see how William Elphinstone – as Chancellor of the kingdom, Keeper of the Privy Seal, Bishop of Aberdeen and founder of its university – was a key figure.

Born in Glasgow in 1431, he first attended its cathedral grammar school, became a priest and then went on to its newly-founded

university to take an arts degree. He might then have spent the rest of his life as a parish priest in the diocese were it not for an uncle who sent him to Paris to study canon law.

On graduating with distinction, he was encouraged by the university to teach in its law faculty. But after a brief spell there, his uncle provided him with the means to study civil

Roman law at Orleans. When his legal education was complete, he was called home in 1471 to become the chief legal officer of the diocese of Glasgow, and then that of St Andrews and Edinburgh.

But his story really began when James III drew him into service as one of his chief advisers and as a Lord of Council in Parliament.

In 1479 the King sent him on an impossible mission to France. He

was to reassure Louis XI that, although James had recently negotiated a peace treaty with England, his ties of friendship and alliance with France were to remain as close and binding as ever.

An Anglo-Scottish treaty, however, was the last thing the French king wanted, since his own policy of national aggrandisement depended largely on keeping the Scots and English hostile to each other – to prevent the English from ever invading France again. The mission, therefore, badly misfired, in that Louis XI was soon able to play on the disloyalty of those Scottish magnates who disapproved of James III's pro-English policies, and so to wreck them.

This was a lesson Elphinstone bore deeply in mind when, as the country's

chief negotiator, he was commissioned to draw up fresh treaties with Richard III in 1484, and Henry VII in 1486, in which clauses were included that should England invade France, the Scots would not be compelled to assist the French by invading England.

In short, a line had to be drawn under the mere succession of truces from war which had plagued relations between Scotland and England for centuries, and solemn treaties had to be concluded in their stead to which their kings should be bound on oath.

As a patriot, Elphinstone saw the long term advantages of a lasting peace between both countries, and spent the rest of his life promoting it.

When appointed Chancellor of the kingdom (its chief legal officer) in 1488, and then Keeper of the Privy Seal in 1494, he used his experience as a senior Lord of Council to seek a more equitable justice system and more efficient ways to administer it.

At that time there was no College of Justice and few manuscripts to inform judges on what the law actually was – which caused many wrong judgments and many delays before appeals were heard. A study of this period's Acts of Parliament, however, shows how a team led by Elphinstone reappraised the whole area of civil and criminal jurisdiction. And in 1507, he persuaded James IV to set up the country's first press to publish the laws of the land and the Acts of Parliament for judges' use.

In fiscal and feudal matters, too, he introduced the country's first land register, so that heirs could more swiftly claim their inheritances, and the Crown its rightful dues from them.

And if today we may find little thrill in the passing of parliamentary bills, we can appreciate how civilising an influence Elphinstone's thoughtful work must have had in his day and beyond – until the College of Justice was founded in 1532.

In 1488 he was consecrated Bishop of Aberdeen, as a reward for his service to the Crown. The diocese was in poor shape, having been without a pastor for five years. So with the same thoughtful analysis, he set about a programme of reform in his diocese which was later to spread to the whole Scottish Church.

First, he reorganised the division of diocesan funds to give more equitable salaries and life tenure to poorer vicars choral and parish priests in the rural areas. Urgent building projects were then undertaken. He led the roof of his half-finished cathedral, completed its central tower, added its steeple and extended its choir eastwards. The citizens of Aberdeen



■ William Elphinstone was a big thinker whose awesome organising capabilities still benefit Scotland today.

were encouraged to rebuild the choir of their parish church of St Nicholas, and they were grateful to him for initiating the erection of a permanent stone bridge over the river Dee.

But his most important concern was that the public worship of God, the Church's liturgy, should be meaningful to all and incorporate all that was best in the country's religious and musical past. But what practical steps could be taken to achieve this?

An ideal solution was at hand – the breviary. This was the Church's official service book which contained hymns, antiphons, psalms, prayers and historical lessons read or sung daily by all priests and vicars choral throughout the land, and which drew deeply and widely on texts from both Old and New Testaments and the lives of the saints. Each diocese had its own Use, as it was called, based mostly on English or Roman models, but there was as yet no Scottish Use.

Accordingly, he encouraged a team of liturgical scholars to visit every

Scottish diocese and collect the history of its local saints, and so, with suitable variations, to compile a Scottish Use of its own. Once each of his brother bishops had agreed on his own local version, Elphinstone was able to obtain James IV's permission to have a truly Scottish breviary constructed, which included an historical synopsis of its national saints like Andrew, Kentigern, Ninian, Columba and Margaret of Scotland as well as local saints like Aberdeen's Machar, Drostan and Devenick.

So some 81 Scottish saints' lives were introduced into the Aberdeen Breviary, as it became known, which was printed in Edinburgh in 1510. Now a better informed clergy throughout the country was able to impart to its Sunday congregations a more constructive view and genuine love of their country's past.

There was one further venture he longed to undertake – the foundation of a university in Old Aberdeen, the heartland of his diocese. Indeed, he

saw it as essential for the educational needs not only of the people of the North East and the Highlands and Islands, but for the nation itself.

In 1494, he went to Rome to convince the Pope of this need. He returned with a document of approval to begin gathering funds to guarantee teachers' salaries, students' bursaries and the building costs of his single-college university.

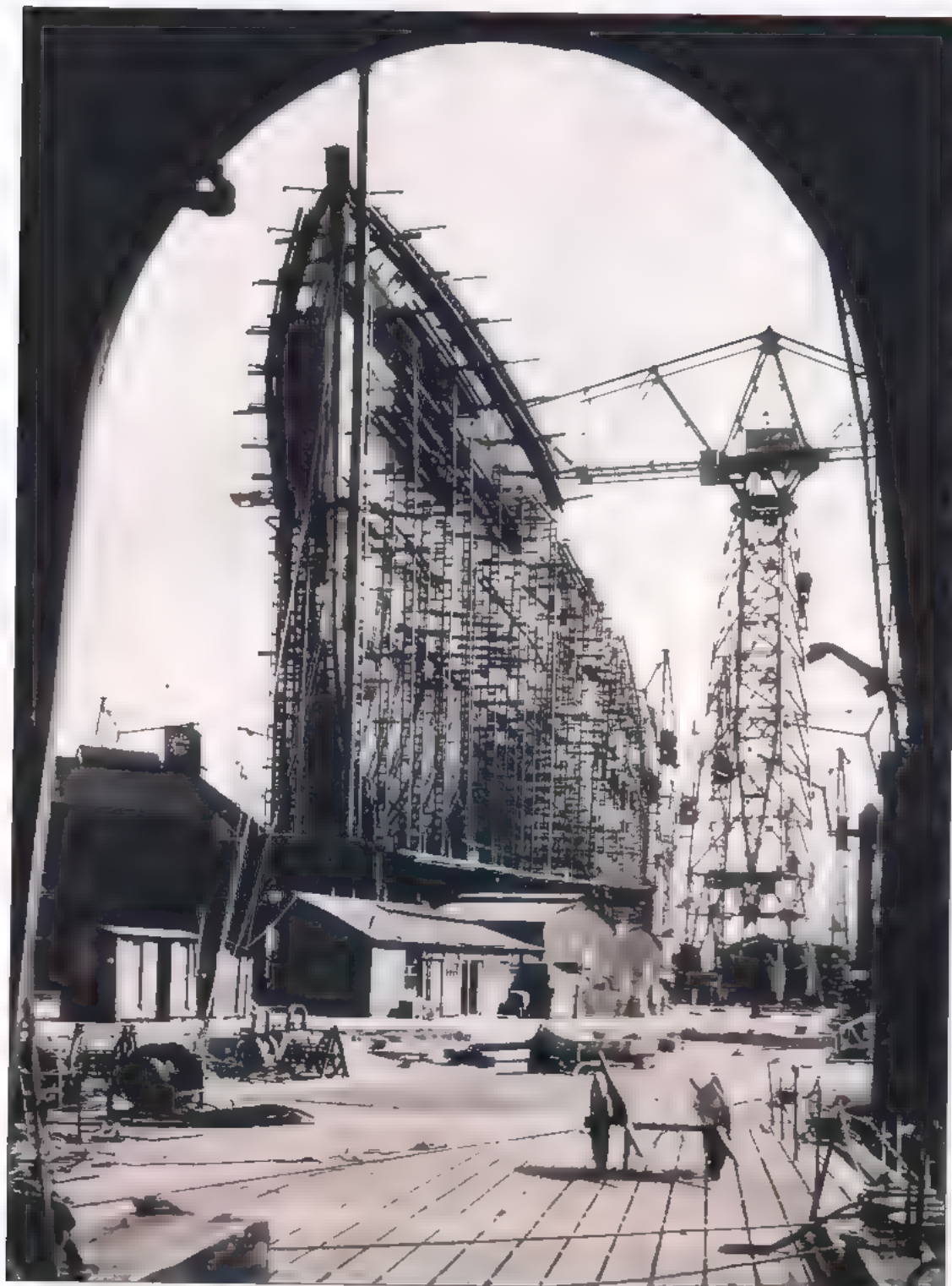
Between 1495 and 1505 he pulled in enough gifts in land and money from the King, his friends and relations, to create an academic community of 36, organised around a handsomely built King's College, only 500 yards from his cathedral.

It was an extraordinary act of faith, as is evident today when we think of its 10,000 students and staff playing their full part in the nation's well-being. The founding of the University of Aberdeen was in many ways the culmination of his life's work, and he died – presumably well satisfied – in 1514. ●

Pride of the Clyde

■ The making of 'the stateliest ship now in being' – initially known as the '534' because she was the 534th ship laid down in the John Brown yards.

On September 26, 1934, the great Cunard liner Queen Mary was launched – by the queen herself. This report from the next day's *Scotsman* reflects the high emotion of the moment



The great moment is over. Without a hitch the towering and splendid ship, which has given the hope of life to Clydebank, took to the water yesterday amid the cheers of a vast crowd.

The launch itself – the greatest in the world – was a marvel of calculation and a sight that those who were present are never likely to forget.

Even the inadequate medium of the wireless did not fail to convey the splendour and tenseness of the moment, when Her Majesty the Queen named and launched the ship.

The secret was out. No better answer to the riddle which everyone has been trying to solve for the past few days could have been given, than that which the Queen gave yesterday, when she said, "I am pleased to name this ship the Queen Mary."

Thus the greatest Cunarder inherits the name of the famous battle cruiser which went down fighting in the Battle of Jutland.

It might be taken as significant that the national warship, this great ship of peace, should carry a Royal name.

Speaking of her function as a messenger of communication between Britain and the United States, His Majesty the King said: "She has been built in fellowship among ourselves; may her life among the great waters spread friendship among nations."

And with these Royal and national wishes, "the stateliest ship now in being" – to use His Majesty's phrase – was sent forth into her element.

The workers who have been carrying out the project are worthy of the minds which conceived the vessel before ever the keel was laid. She has indeed been built in fellowship, for not only has there been the closest co-ordination between brain and hand, but many parts of the country have contributed to her making.

Her eight giant propellers, the

takes to the water



■ A sight that those who were present are never likely to forget. Tugs tow the unfinished Queen Mary to a Clyde dock for fitting-out.

heaviest in the world, came from the Thames yards. Her stern frame, which weighs 190 tons, was made at Darlington by the Darlington Forge Company, which unfortunately has had to close its works since for lack of orders. The electro-hydraulic steering gear came from Edinburgh.

It is needless to recite all the names of all the places which benefit directly and indirectly from the fashioning and equipment of this great ship.

One other form of co-operation, unusual in this country, has helped to bring her into being. She was planned, and the work was begun on her, just when the economic blizzard was gathering force.

In December, 1931, the order to cease work, unavoidable as it was, spread dismay in Clydebank. For more than two years the dockyard was silent, although Mr David Kirkwood MP never gave up hope.

In the end, government assistance was promised on condition that competition was eliminated between the Cunard and White Star Lines. This was achieved, and the issues out of the Exchequer resulting from the arrangement now exceed £1,000,000.

Therefore, the venture upon which the Cunard and White Star companies have embarked is one in

which the nation has a special interest. It is a great and magnificent enterprise which has captured the national imagination, as scarcely any other undertaking could have done.

Great hopes are placed on the Queen Mary. Her owners, no doubt, expect her to win back from the Rex the record for an Atlantic crossing, which was long held by the Mauretania and only yielded up in her old age by those thriving youngsters, the Bremen and the Europa.

But any such achievement will be subsidiary and incidental to the real purpose, which is to make two ships do the work of three on the Atlantic Ferry. When the Queen Mary leaves Southampton at noon on Saturday, her sister ship will leave New York.

That is the schedule which determines the average speed that has to be achieved and it works out at rather more than 28 knots. The average speed of the Rex on her record crossing was 28.92 knots.

It would have been simple enough to have designed the Queen Mary solely for speed, but the conditions

of economic working have to be considered. It would, for instance, be of no more advantage to save a few hours on the crossing if this meant that the Queen Mary would arrive in New York in the middle of the night. At the same time, the position of the Blue Riband has doubtless a commercial value.

Much speculation has been aroused by the statement of Sir Percy Bates that the Queen Mary's sister ship is undoubtedly to be laid down. It is still premature but

Scotland may legitimately hope that the same berth will be used again.

Tyneside points out that it built the Mauretania, which has

certainly justified its builders. On the other hand, a high official of the Cunard-White Star Company is reported to have said that Tyneside will need to reduce its tenders if there is to be a chance of the works not going to Clydebank. It is clear that no decision has been reached.

In the meantime, the fitting of the Queen Mary will continue to give employment on the Clyde. It is this

aspect of the great enterprise which more than anything has created interest and enthusiasm in Scotland.

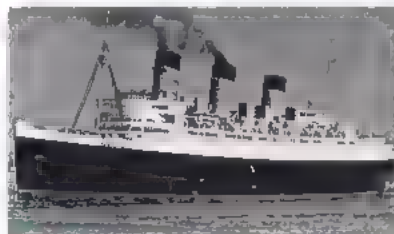
In 1913, both in tonnage and engine power, the shipbuilding output of the Clyde exceeded materially the whole production of Germany, and its horse-power was more than double that of the Tyne.

After the war a low point was touched in 1923 but there was improvement until 1930, except for 1926, the year of the strike.

The making of the Queen Mary has brought money and comfort into hundreds of homes. The men who have driven rivets into the steel plates of the vessel have found new hope as they swarmed over the vessel like Lilliputians surrounding Gulliver.

Their labour and skill have been built into the fabric of this gigantic ship and with them has been mingled the hope of better times, of employment that will not be ruthlessly interrupted, of the peaceful development of trade that will bring back to the Clyde and to Scotland a prosperity that seemed to have been lost.

Such were the hopes that the Queen Mary carried with her yesterday, as she slipped steadily and surely into the waters of the Clyde. ●



■ The great liner in her heyday.

For her sisters' sake

At a time when females were not welcome in medicine, a determined Scotswoman opened doors for them by challenging and changing old attitudes



■ Elsie Inglis often waived her doctor's fees for the poor – while also campaigning for other women's rights.

slums where poverty, poor housing and lack of birth control took a terrible toll of her contemporaries

In 1910, this infirmary was merged with the women's hospital in Edinburgh's Bruntsfield set up by Jex-Blake, who had by then retired

Meanwhile, Elsie Inglis continued to practise as a doctor with a busy clinic, often waiving her fee for poor patients and persuading the city council to investigate the inadequate diets of the working classes. At the same time she was campaigning for women's rights as founder of the Scottish Women's Suffrage Federation

When the First World War broke out, Inglis was 50 and had achieved much. Nevertheless, she embarked on another challenge which would surely hasten her death. She had offered her services to both the Royal Army Medical Corps and the Red Cross, but had been rejected by both. So instead, she helped to raise enough money through the Suffragette movement to staff and equip women's ambulance units to work in several of the battle zones

So in 1915 Elsie Inglis went to Serbia and helped set up three medical bases known as the Scottish Women's Hospitals. They were overrun by advancing German troops, but the women continued their humanitarian work in captivity, caring for the wounded round the clock

Inglis was brought back to Britain in 1916, but she had been severely wounded. She returned to the war zone in Russia with another women's hospital. She was eventually worn out and with her health failing, she made her final return to Britain in October, 1917, a month later

It was eight years after this that the Elsie Inglis Maternity Hospital was opened in her memory, continuing her policy of offering women control over their own health-care. For half a century this unique and much loved place kept alive the revered name of a woman who gave everything to medicine, including her very life ●

ELSIE INGLIS (1864–1917)

Scotland and Edinburgh in particular played a vital role in the battle for women to have the right to practise medicine. Today, the very idea of barring women doctors seems ludicrous, but in 19th century Britain, there were different and very strange standards

To Victorian thinking, it was not only that women should study anatomy alongside men or examine patients in the wards. In 1870, scores of male students at the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh signed a complaint that several lecturers had admitted women to their classes without asking whether the males agreed to this, which they certainly did not

The presence of women at anatomy and surgery classes and in the dissecting room gave rise to 'certain feelings' which distracted

them from their studies. The college agreed that mixed classes were neither proper nor expedient'

It took the English-born Sophia Jex-Blake to break down by sheer determination this deep-rooted prejudice, which ran right through the profession. In 1878 she opened a school of medicine for women in her adopted city of Edinburgh

One of her early students was Elsie Maud Inglis, born in India of Scots parents and destined to become another of the most influential women in Scottish medical history

Maybe it was inevitable that these two very strong-willed female trailblazers would fall out; so Inglis opened a rival establishment in Edinburgh in 1889 – the Medical College for Women – which was soon attracting students from all over the world

It was another six years before the universities lifted the final barriers against female medical students,

and eventually in 1909 her school became linked with the traditional Royal Colleges of Surgeons and Physicians

But during the 1890s, Elsie Inglis had been continuing the women's battle on other fronts. Moving to London for a while, she worked in the teaching hospital for women patients which had been founded by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, the first Englishwoman to qualify as a doctor. Inglis was shocked to realise how little specialist care was available for women elsewhere. This strengthened her support for the Suffragette movement – still struggling for women's right to vote – and inspired her to establish, in partnership with another woman, a similar hospital in Edinburgh which specialised in midwifery and women's health

It began modestly as a seven bed maternity hospital, expanding eventually to look after women's general health needs in the city



■ Eskimos told Rae what had become of the Franklin expedition.

Surprise reward for the Orkney ice man

JOHN RAE (1813-93)

SOME pioneering Scots doctors found fame through achievements outside medicine, and one Orkney born John Rae was one who like his contemporary David Livingstone became an explorer. Instead of the burning African sun, though, Rae's chosen environment was the bitterly cold Arctic shores of northern Canada, where much of the coastline was still uncharted by the mid 19th century.

Rae qualified as a surgeon at Edinburgh in 1833 and soon joined the Hudson Bay Company, becoming resident medical officer at Moose Fort.

In 1846 he took part in his first expedition, surveying 700 miles of ice-bound coast. From that moment, it seems, the dangerous and demanding challenge of Arctic travel took charge of his life.

At that time, a two-ship expedition led by the English explorer Sir John Franklin had gone missing while seeking a north west passage across the top of the American continent. Nothing had been heard from the crews of the *Erebus* and *Terror* for about a year when Rae was persuaded to join a search party. Although this covered 5,000

miles of desolate seas, the search was fruitless. Three years later, the British government persuaded him to try again, and this time he learned from Eskimos about the fate of the Franklin expedition. Its ships had been hemmed in by ice, the leader had died in 1847, and 65 survivors had perished while trying to walk across the ice towards land.

The Eskimos showed Rae items from the doomed expedition which confirmed the story, and it later turned out that Franklin had indeed proved the existence of the North west Passage.

On their return to London, Rae's party found that their discovery entitled them to a government award of £10,000. Rae spent his share on building a schooner to continue his Arctic surveys, but it was lost in a storm before he could make use of it.

Rae was a very tough character, noted for his endurance. He once walked 40 miles across the Canadian terrain on snowshoes in seven hours, arriving in Toronto in time to go out for dinner, showing no sign of fatigue. Yet when he died in London it was from influenza and congestion of the lungs. He was buried at St Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall.

ANATOMY OF A FRIENDSHIP

MATTHEW BAILLIE (1761-1823)

AS the 18th century closed, doctors still had much to discover about the workings of the body, though a lot could be learned through 'morbid anatomy', the study of the diseased organs of patients who had died.

It was a Scot called Matthew Baillie who advanced the science of pathology in 1795 by publishing a classic work 'The Morbid Anatomy of some of the most Important Parts of the Human Body'.

It was the first such work in English and a huge improvement on its Latin predecessors. But here is a remarkable illustration of how single-

mindedly these early pioneers pursued medical knowledge.

Baillie dedicated his book to his great friend, another London based Scots doctor called David Pitcairn. However, two years later Pitcairn died of a little known condition called oedema of the glottis, which Baillie had not been able to describe in his book. He was able to rectify this by attending the autopsy on his friend's body, conducted by three other anatomists, and by adding his observations to later editions. In such circles, knowledge came before sentiment.

Baillie had been born in Shotts, Lanarkshire, and was the nephew of the eminent obstetrician William

Hunter. Although he studied medicine at Glasgow and Oxford, it is reckoned that the love of scientific precision passed to him by his uncle was among his prime professional assets.

Like Hunter, Matthew Baillie also became a physician to the royal family, inheriting his uncle's London house and dissecting theatre, but also his demanding work ethic.

Although not a robust man, Matthew Baillie began to work 16-hour days and give up his annual holidays, eventually dying of a tubercular wasting disease at his country house in Gloucestershire.

He is remembered by a bust in Westminster Abbey.



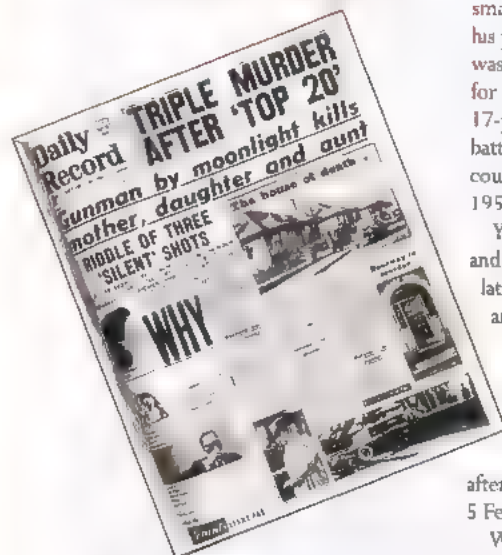
■ Westminister Abbey, in London.

THE EVIL EYES OF A MASS MURDERER



■ He was evil personified and believed he'd got away with murder – again and again. But too-clever Peter Manuel would eventually trip himself up.

A small-time criminal who turned into the worst killer in Scottish legal history, Peter Manuel finally paid for taking a dozen lives



■ Shock headlines – recording a Manuel triple murder in 1956.

He was Scotland's first – and worst – serial killer. He slaughtered 12 men, women and children indiscriminately, all but one over only two years, mostly in a small area of just five square miles of Lanarkshire. His name? The infamous Peter Thomas Anthony Manuel, probably the most evil psychopath in Scottish criminal history.

His bloody trail of terror left Scotland stunned – and hardened detectives shocked, seemingly powerless to stop the grim, unrelenting toll.

Manuel, a handsome, habitual small-time criminal who lived with his parents in Birkenshaw, Lanarkshire, was questioned by police as a suspect for the first of the many murders 17-year-old Anne Kneilands whose battered body was found on the golf course at East Kilbride in January, 1956.

Yet he was allowed away to go on and on, killing and killing. Just a week later he again battered to death another female – 55-year-old Anne Steel in Glasgow, and then in June, 1956 he stabbed Ellen Petrie to death, again in Glasgow.

But the most bizarre twist came in September that year after Manuel broke into a house at 5 Fennsbank Avenue, Rutherglen.

Wealthy baker William Watt had left a few days earlier on a fishing trip near Lochgilphead. So he escaped the slaughter as Manuel methodically

murdered Watt's wife Marton, his 16-year-old daughter Vivienne and his sister-in-law Mary Brown by shooting them in the head as they lay in bed.

And Manuel must have allowed himself a wry smile of satisfaction and relief when he read 10 days later that the heartbroken husband and father had been arrested for the murders.

Detectives were convinced Watt was the killer and that he had driven home that night and then returned to his fishing hotel – especially as witnesses thought they had seen him on the road at that time.

He was charged with the murders and held in Glasgow's Barlinnie Prison – where, by an incredible coincidence, the real murderer, Manuel, ended up at the same time.

He had been sent there on October 2 to serve an 18-month sentence for breaking into a colliery canteen at Blantyre.

Then, cheekily, Manuel asked for a meeting with Watt's lawyer, Laurence Dowdall – to tell him his client was innocent and he, Manuel, knew who the killer was.

He refused to name the man but said a well-known criminal told him the night before the murders that there was 'a good job' on at a house in Fennsbank Avenue. Manuel said he didn't get involved as there were women involved – this from the man who had already brutalised and killed women even before the Watts.

He said he met the man the next day who asked him to get the man

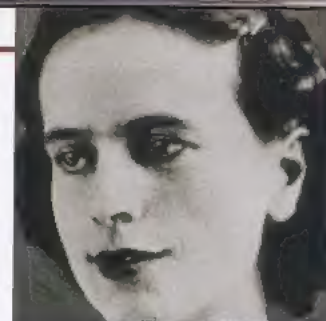


■ Manuel manacled: entering the Court of Appeal in Edinburgh.

gave a blow-by-blow account of the killings, how the girl ran screaming from a room and was knocked out with a punch, tied up and later shot in the head. And how one of the older



■ Feeling invincible, Manuel shot Peter Smart, his wife Doris and their son Michael in this Uddingston bungalow.



■ Two victims: Margaret Brown (top) and Marion Watt whose husband was first suspected.

women was found to be still alive and was shot again in the head (confirmed by the post mortem).

Shocked, Dowdall told him bluntly that he was convinced he was the killer. There was a dramatic pause. The mass murderer and Scotland's top defence lawyer stared at each other. Then, with a shrug, Manuel said simply: "No, I didn't do it. I wasn't there."

Dowdall reported back to the police. All agreed Manuel was the killer – but there was insufficient evidence. After an ordeal lasting 67 days, Watt was suddenly released from prison, leaving Manuel to stay inside for another year.

It was hardly surprising that Scotland's murder rate suddenly slumped during this period.

But this bizarre tale, proving that facts really can be stranger than fiction, was to get even more bizarre.

On his release, Manuel amazingly asked for a meeting with Dowdall and Watt. The confrontation came in the Whitehall Restaurant in Glasgow's Renfield Street in December, 1957.

First, Manuel showed Dowdall a girl's photo and asked if he knew her. He said he didn't and Manuel tore it to pieces. Unknown to the lawyer, it was a picture of the first victim – Anne Kneilands.

Watt tried to loosen up Manuel by buying him about 12 whiskies, but during the lunch he teased Watt by describing his house. Suddenly Watt leapt to his feet and said angrily: "If you had anything to do with what happened, I will tear you to pieces."

Dowdall said later: "For a tense moment I thought Watt was going to carry out his threat, but I managed to catch his eye and he sat down."

In the end the lawyer told Manuel

that he would not see him again unless he told the police what he had told him. Manuel refused, and walked out.

The next wave of murders was about to start. Just days later, on a brief visit to the north of England, on December 8, 1957, Manuel shot and cut the throat of taxi driver Sydney Dunn on the moors, 20 miles outside Newcastle. By now he must have thought he was invulnerable. It seemed he could kill and kill and no-one could stop him.

As if to prove this, he returned to his old killing fields – his home patch of Lanarkshire. On December 28 he strangled pretty 17-year-old schoolgirl Isabelle Cook, near her Mount Vernon home and buried her nude body in a shallow grave.

Now feeling invincible, four days later he broke into a bungalow at Sheepburn Road, Uddingston, and carried out a copy of the Watt killings.

Self-made businessman Peter Smart, 45, and his wife Doris were shot through the head at close range as they lay in bed. Their 11-year-old son Michael was also shot in the head.

This time, instead of merely a few rings stolen from the Watt house, there was ready cash for Manuel in the house. Mr Smart had drawn new, consecutively-numbered notes from his bank a few days previously.

With his criminal experience, Manuel must have known the danger of spending such new notes so soon and so locally. But the habitual crook – who was normally short of cash – started spending freely in a hotel pub near his home.

It was almost as if he was taunting the police; as if he felt he could do anything and get away with it. After all, hadn't he literally got away with murder – 12 times over? Apart from

the 11 victims over the past 24 months, there was another murder – in September, 1954 a prostitute was strangled in Pimlico, London.

But at long last, the police were on to him. They heard about his spending spree, recovered some of the crisp £5 notes and established that their numbers corresponded with those drawn by Peter Smart.

On January 13, 1958, Manuel was arrested and soon made full written confessions to murder after murder.

He took officers to where he had buried Isabelle Cooke who had gone missing four weeks earlier. He stopped in a field and callously told them: "I'm standing on her right now."

The scene was set for one of the most dramatic and disturbing trials Scotland has ever witnessed.

On May 12, 1958, the trial began at the High Court in Glasgow before Lord Cameron. Manuel claimed his confessions were made under threats from the police and, in a special defence, said Watt killed his own family. On May 22 he

sensationally

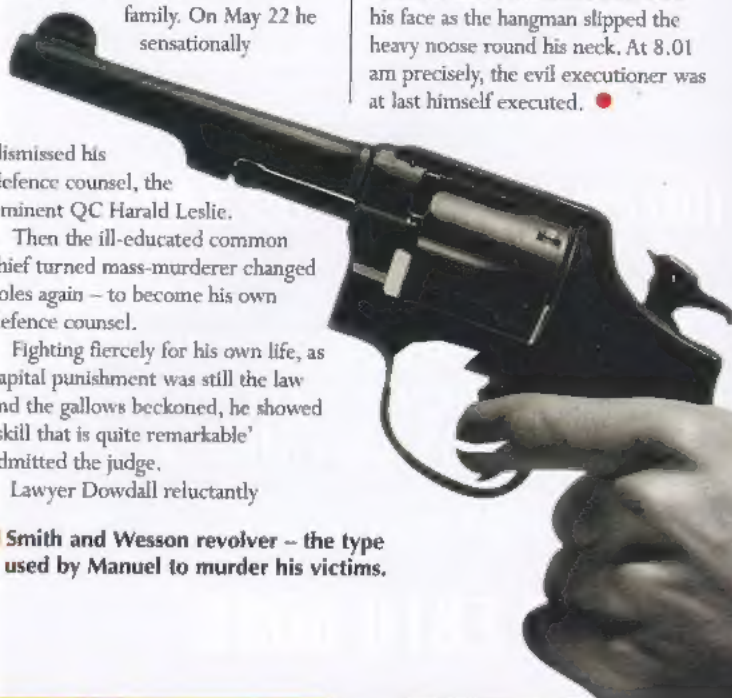
dismissed his defence counsel, the eminent QC Harald Leslie.

Then the ill-educated common thief turned mass-murderer changed roles again – to become his own defence counsel.

Fighting fiercely for his own life, as capital punishment was still the law and the gallows beckoned, he showed 'skill that is quite remarkable' admitted the judge.

Lawyer Dowdall reluctantly

■ Smith and Wesson revolver – the type used by Manuel to murder his victims.



admitted: "His performance was extraordinary – almost professional. He handled witnesses with audacity and aplomb." Lord Cameron later observed that he performed with "a remarkable feat of endurance, skill and marshalling of facts".

But it was all in vain. After 14 days the jury took less than three hours to find him guilty of murdering the Watts, the Smarts and Isabelle Cooke. The judge ruled there was no corroboration to his Kneilands confession and he must be found not guilty. Later, in prison, Manuel was to confess to four other previously unsolved murders.

In court, with his dark menacing eyes, Manuel stared as Lord Cameron solemnly placed the black cap on his head and sentenced him to death.

An appeal was dismissed and at Barlinnie Prison on the morning of July 11, 1958, Manuel heard Mass and took Holy Communion.

He was led to the execution chamber and a white hood covered his face as the hangman slipped the heavy noose round his neck. At 8.01 am precisely, the evil executioner was at last himself executed. ●

Home of the family who ran Scotland



■ Well worth visiting: the Boyd family's Dean Castle at Kilmarnock contains ancient armour and a collection of old musical instruments.



Dean Castle is still in excellent repair, says biker historian David R Ross on the trail of James III

After his father's death at Roxburgh Castle, James III of Scotland was crowned King at Kelso Abbey, the ruins of which (open to the public) stand in the town of the same name, overlooking the junction of the rivers Teviot and Tweed.

During James's minority, the reins of power in Scotland were seized by the Boyd family, huge landowners in the Kilmarnock area. They more or less ran Scotland for several years.

They had been granted land in Ayrshire after fighting with distinction at the Battle of Largs in the reign of Alexander III, and Robert Bruce ratified these possessions.

For a small entry charge, it is well worth visiting Dean Castle on the northern side of Kilmarnock to see the old home of the Boyd family.

There is the original massive old four-square tower as well as a newer palace block surrounded by curtain walling, all in a beautiful state of repair. The buildings contain some marvellous bits and pieces, especially in the way of ancient arms and armour, and there is a collection of old musical instruments.

A little to the south-east of Dean stands a large, tree-covered mound. This was the site of an earlier timber

castle that fell into disuse when the first part of Dean – the aforementioned four-square tower – was constructed in stone.

James III's demise came shortly after the Battle of Sauchieburn in 1488. Sauchieburn has no monument marking its site, although it is reckoned the main action took place at a spot called Little Canglar, on the Sauchieburn about a mile west of the battlefield of Bannockburn.

Another Bannockburn connection is the abiding story that James III carried the same great two-handed sword at Sauchieburn that Bruce had carried at his nearby victory in 1314.

This sword was later kept at Clackmannan Tower, still standing above the town of the same name. The widow of the last laird of Clackmannan, an ardent Jacobite, was visited by Robert Burns, and was so impressed with the poet that she fetched down Bruce's sword and 'knighted' him in the castle hall. This sword is now in the keeping of the Earl of Elgin.

The presence of Bruce's sword did not stand James in good stead, however, and he fled the battlefield in the direction of the Forth to try to escape in one of the ships of his

admiral, Sir Andrew Wood, who hailed from Largo in Fife. The story runs that James's horse shied when they unexpectedly came across a miller's wife drawing water from a burn.

She took James indoors but his pursuers found him there and stabbed him to death. Legend states that the miller's name was Beaton, and this Beaton's Mill survived until 1954, when it was accidentally burned down.

Its site – the last vestiges of walls marking the fatal spot – can still be visited. It stands beside the Bannock Burn by a little footbridge at Milton, about 100 metres downstream from the point where the burn flows under the A872.

James's last resting place is in Cambuskenneth Abbey, the ruins of which stand in a loop of the Forth opposite Stirling.

He was buried under the high altar beside his wife, and their tomb was rediscovered in 1864, when a new monument was erected over their remains.

The gate at Cambuskenneth is generally unlocked in daylight hours, so you can visit the tomb of a king and also have a look at the interesting gargoyles that adorn Cambuskenneth's surviving bell-tower. ●

Scotland's Story

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Library Scottish Rugby Union. p14/15 Harp: NMS; Tioram Castle: Historic Scotland. p16/17/19 Linlithgow Palace: Historic Scotland; Falkland Palace: SCRAN. p20 Head of a King on Carved Oak Roundel and Craignethan Castle: HS; The Tree of Jesse from the Beaton Panels: National Museums of Scotland, p22/23 William Elphinstone: Ian Campbell and David Stronach from "King's College Chapel, Aberdeen: 500 Years", Edited by J. Geddes; William Elphinstone: Scottish National Portrait Gallery. p30 Dean Castle: From the collection in the Dean Castle Archives.

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SCOTLAND'S STORY

NEXT WEEK IN Part 17

A KING WORTHY OF THE THRONE

By far the most successful of the Stewart kings, James IV was a warrior, pilgrim, palace-builder and notorious womaniser.

FLODDEN'S BLOODY TOLL

James IV and most of his nobles died in Scotland's bloodiest battle with the English. Enemy, but it was almost so different.

THE GREAT MAKARS

The Golden Age of Scottish poetry produced some classic writing, but we know little about the poets themselves.

SCOTLAND'S NAVY

Although the Scots never matched the English navy, they built the Great Michael, one of the world's biggest ships.

A PERVERSION TOO FAR

Wealthy farmer Maxwell Garvie was to pay with his life when he encouraged his wife Sheila to have an affair.

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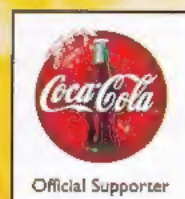
The Millennium Festival includes over 15,000 individual projects made possible by funding from the National Lottery. From carnivals to concerts, country fairs to sports days, art exhibitions to street parades, the Millennium Festival is the greatest celebration the world has ever seen and it's happening near you.

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For details of Millennium Festival events in Scotland visit www.millenniumscotland.co.uk or call our Scottish office on 01259 219 905

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